

Eugene Holtier Varnish

Usage Guidelines:

Before varnishing, the instrument has to be prepared: tanned, primed, stained, darkened, etc. and sealed.

1. Mineral Ground Application

a) First Coat

- Mix clear varnish with pumice using a glass muller to incorporate the powder into the varnish.
- Apply it on the instrument using a stiff brush for scroll and rib joint with the plates, and spread it evenly with a 3M™ white pad on the large surfaces.
- Let it sit 10-15 minutes, then rub the excess using square pads of dock fabric.
- Remove the excess ground carefully from scroll crevices and rib plate joint using a dry, stiff brush.
- Rub the instrument with the dock fabric until you get a nice, burnished look.
- Let it dry overnight in the UV box.

b) Second Coat

- Second coat can be applied following the first ground coat procedure or you can add brown varnish in the mixture to start building color on the instrument. Let it dry overnight in the UV box.

2. Ground Application with No Mineral

The ground for spruce (top)

- Rub clear varnish onto spruce top in a circular motion.

The ground for maple (back)

- Mix clear varnish with brown varnish and test the intensity on a sample of the same wood prepared the same way as the instrument.
- Adjust the intensity of the color based on the contrast desired on the maple flame.
- As on the top, rub a thin coat of the color mixture in a circular motion.
- Let this coat dry overnight in the UV box.
- Repeat the same steps for the second coat. Use a very thin layer application.

3. Varnish Application

For the first coat, use brown varnish. The coat should be thin, applied on the scroll and rib joint with a synthetic stiff brush (acrylic paint brush).

For larger surfaces, use fingers in a circular motion or tap with your palm. You may also use the printing method with a piece of prosthetic foam.

Run your fingers across the grain on the spruce top to accentuate the winter growth.

Let it dry overnight in the UV box.

Follow the same procedure for the next coats of varnish, eventually mixing clear varnish into the brown if you think the instrument is getting too dark.

A coat or two of clear varnish applied at the end will build film and depth on the surface. Generally, the working time for the varnish at room temperature is about 4-5 hours.

4. Adding Color

Eugene Holtier Varnish has an intense, transparent and beautiful brown and requires no additional color. Yet at times, you may find the need to add color in order to achieve certain desired shades.

Rosinate is highly recommended for its indisputably superior quality. Solvents such as Lavender Spike Oil must be used with rosinatate to dissolve it and maintain the clarity of the varnish.

High quality pigments and oil paint such as those made by Kremer Pigments and Winsor & Newton can also be used.

Be careful, as different pigments/oil paints vary in opacity and translucency. Generally, the most transparent colors should be used for violin varnish application. Winsor & Newton's Alizarin Crimson, Madder Brown and Indian Yellow are good choices to compliment the color of the varnish.

5. Finishing

The finishing should be done after a few days once the varnish is cured. To finish, mix Tripoli (#51-3730) with Rubbing Oil (#52-3900). Apply the mixture on a soft cloth and rub the varnish lightly using a circular motion. Buff it with a dry, clean, soft cotton cloth.

These are general guidelines. We are sure that in time you will find other ways to use Eugene Holtier Varnish and obtain excellent results.

Helpful Tips:

- Varnish viscosity can change with temperature. To decrease viscosity of varnish, use warm water to gently heat the bottled varnish.

- In the event you have a weak UV box, you can add a catalyst. We recommend manganese catalyst, which dries uniformly. Experiment with how much catalyst you add, usually a few drops is enough. Too much catalyst can compromise the varnish.
- Catalysts are toxic!!! Always wear gloves when you add a catalyst to the varnish.
- When a bottle cap is hard to open, warm it with a hair dryer. It will help loosen up the cap.
- Use odorless Turpenoid® or any petroleum-based solvent to clean varnish or applicators.
- Storage – Keep the varnish bottles away from heat, flame, and direct sun. Seal tightly when not in use. Store in a dark, cool place.